

Appendix D

Maintenance Meetings

It was two hours prior to line of departure (LD) and the Infantry Battalion BMO was briefing his TF Commander on projected combat power for the upcoming mission. The TF Commander was not happy! They were conducting a movement to contact, and they were the main effort. The TF Commander wanted to get the maximum amount of combat power to ensure he could meet the Brigade Commander's intent. However, the projections were not as good as the BMO briefed at yesterday's brigade maintenance meeting. The BMO remembered telling the Brigade XO and the SPO that at least two final drives were needed; a Turret Distribution Box (TDB) and several other parts for his key combat systems. However, he did not have document numbers or National Item Identification Numbers (NIINs) for the parts. He thought they had been ordered, but in hindsight it appeared they had not. The SPO and the Maintenance Officer did not make any commitments to get these parts (it was imperative to have the critical information, document numbers and NIINs, to ensure the parts could be obtained).

The battle went as expected. With only 30 of the 44 M1s and M2s operational for the battle, the TF was not successful in meeting the Brigade Commander's intent. As a result, the battalion and ultimately the brigade had to go to a hasty defense. The reality facing the Brigade Commander was far different from the projections he heard from the XO the night before. The Brigade Commander made a mental note to himself to discuss this issue with the XO and the FSB Commander. The reason this happened is because the Brigade did not have a SOP, which specified the purpose of the maintenance meeting. The Brigade Commander embarked upon the operation with inaccurate information concerning the status of his critical combat systems. The problem lay in the flawed maintenance meeting process. The Brigade Commander did not have a reliable system for collecting, analyzing, and acting upon maintenance management information. In this article, the characteristics and dimensions of an effective maintenance meeting will be explored and it will be explained how the components of the maintenance meeting process combine to provide the Brigade Commander with maximum combat power at the decisive point on the battlefield.

THE MAINTENANCE MEETING

D-1. The unit maintenance meeting is the forum where leaders and maintenance managers provide the commander with a clear picture of their maintenance posture, and the projected combat power or maintenance posture for future operations. This event is the key forum for synchronizing the efforts of leaders and maintenance managers. It ultimately ensures sufficient combat power is available to meet the commander's intent for future operations. Figure D-1 illustrates a maintenance meeting. The maintenance meeting at a minimum should:

- Focus on the commander's priority of maintenance and priority of support.
- Build combat power for future operations by:
 - Building contracts specifying who will take specific actions, when these actions will be accomplished, and who will report on these actions.
 - Tracking contracts/issues and ensuring closing-out prior to and during the meeting.
 - Ensuring key maintenance managers and leaders are present.
 - Enforcing standards.

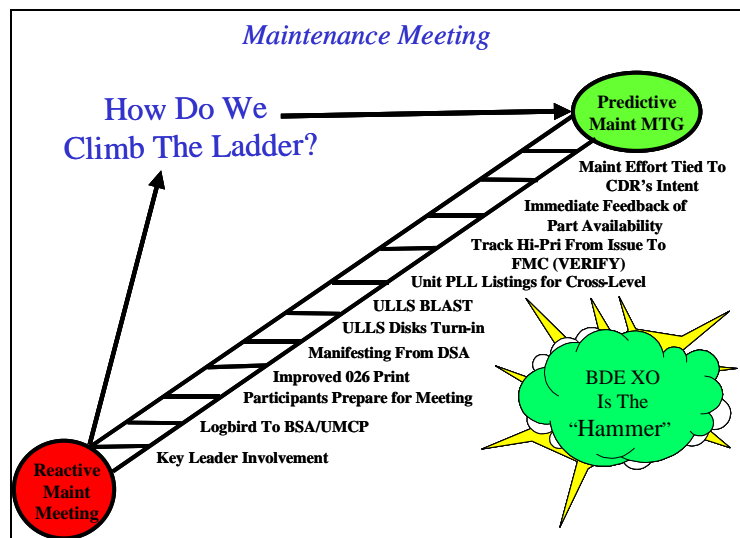


Figure D-1. Maintenance Meeting

D-2. The unit leader's unit has a choice as to whether their maintenance meeting will be reactive or predictive. The leaders ensure the maintenance meeting adheres to the required steps that produce a predictive maintenance meeting. Conducting the meeting in accordance with the ladder displayed in Figure D-1 will result in the meeting being predictive rather than reactive.

MEETING FOCUS

D-3. If the maintenance meeting is not focused on the correct goals, does not have a set agenda, and participants are unprepared,

maintenance managers may miss many critical areas. The meeting will eventually become reactive rather than proactive. Without a clear focus, maintenance managers will not gain a clear picture of their unit's maintenance posture.

ATTENDEES AND THEIR ROLES

D-4. When planning for the maintenance meeting process, it must be considered who should conduct the meeting and which key participants should be involved. A commander would never conduct a training meeting without his key subordinates. The same holds true for the maintenance meeting. For an effective maintenance meeting, unit leadership must be involved. Without key leader involvement, enforcement of contracts between different units is difficult, and the commander's intent may not get adequately relayed or enforced. The following is a suggested list of attendees:

- Higher-unit Executive Officer (such as the Brigade XO for a brigade maintenance meeting) – responsible for chairing the meeting.
- Support Battalion SPO.
- Support Operations Maintenance Officer.
- Material Management Center (MMC) Representative.
- Higher-unit S4 Representative.
- Unit Maintenance Technicians/Officers.
- Separate Company XOs/Motor Sergeants.
- SSA or TSO Supply Technician/Representative.
- DS Maintenance Company Shop Officer.
- Logistics Assistance Representatives (LARs).
- Combat Service Support Automation Management Office (CSSAMO) Representative.

Described below are the roles of the previously mentioned key attendees:

- **Unit XO.** Chairs the maintenance meeting and ultimately, is the “hammer” or the enforcer of contracts. The XO enforces the completion of contracts and ensures the commander's intent is followed during the conduct of the maintenance meeting.
- **Support Operations Officer.** Usually co-chairs the maintenance meeting but chairs the meeting in the absence of the unit XO. In addition, this officer conducts the pre-maintenance meeting, supervises the maintenance meeting site set-up, tracks contracts at the maintenance meeting, and finally, coordinates the efforts of the SSA Supply Technician and Shop Officer.
- **MMC Representative.** Serves as the interface between the support battalion and the units providing support to the support battalion. In a division, the MMC Representative provides interface between the Support Operations Section and the FSB. In addition, the MMC representative has the

capability to provide a shipment status for parts being shipped from the higher echelon warehouse and an updated status on local purchase actions.

- **S4 Representative.** Attends to ensure he has a clear picture of the unit's maintenance posture.
- **Unit Representative.** Primary focus is to provide a status of their unit's current combat power and projections based upon contracts at the maintenance meeting. The Unit Representative ensures he has all NMC equipment information; such as document numbers and the National Stock Numbers (NSNs) for the critical parts required.
- **SSA Supply Technician/Representative.** Focuses on providing information as to which Class IX parts are available within the SSA and which parts are available for customer pick-up.
- **LAO.** Receives updates on systemic maintenance issues. Also provides status concerning long lead-time parts or parts not otherwise available in-theater.
- **CSSAMO.** Monitors maintenance management automation systems status. When Unit Representatives troubleshoot system issues, the CSSAMO Representative retrieves first-hand information in regard to what the problem is and prepares a plan of action to correct it.

D-5. Having the right people at the right place does not equate to an effective maintenance meeting if they do not have the right tools. Just as an effective mechanic has the proper tools and test equipment, the participants of the maintenance meeting must have the right tools and they must be prepared for the business at hand. Figure D-2 shows, at a minimum, what the key participants must have.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Maintenance Meeting</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>WHAT THE PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BRING WITH THEM</i></p>	
<p><u>UNIT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of Combat Power/NMC • ULLS generated NMC reports • PLL listings • Key issues/concerns • UMCP Locations (Curr/Proj) 	<p><u>SUPPORT OPS MAINT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 026 Print • Theater ASL listing • Listing of contracts/issues from previous meeting • Manifest of Critical Parts Shipments
<p><u>SHOP OFFICE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 006 print • ULLS disk T/I status • Shop stock listing 	<p><u>TSO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASL listing • ULLS disk T/I status • Customer parts P/U status
<p><u>DMC</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theater ASL listing • Manifests of any recent Class IX shipment • Local purchase status • Critical Parts From MSB 	<p><u>LAO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status on any long lead time parts • Status of parts that are not available in theater • Critical Maint Issues/SOUM/MAM

Figure D-2. Maintenance Meeting Participants

Meeting Timing and Agenda

D-6. Another key factor in organizing an effective maintenance meeting must be addressed: timing. When considering the timing of the maintenance meeting there are several variables that must be reviewed for the maintenance meeting to be effective and relevant. Evaluate the disk drop Time-line and Synchronization Plan to ensure the 026 used for the meeting is as current and accurate as possible (this will prevent excessive write-ins and increase the brevity of the maintenance meeting). Establish a set time and location for the maintenance meeting and formulate adjustments in accordance with METT-TC considerations. For example, on days of battle preparation, the maintenance meeting is conducted at 1000 hrs. and on mission days the meeting is conducted two hours after actions cease.

D-7. As with all meetings, a clear, well-defined, focused agenda is a must. With the maintenance meeting, the agenda must meet the commander's intent and focus on what the commander deems critical. Figure D-3 shows a suggested maintenance meeting agenda.

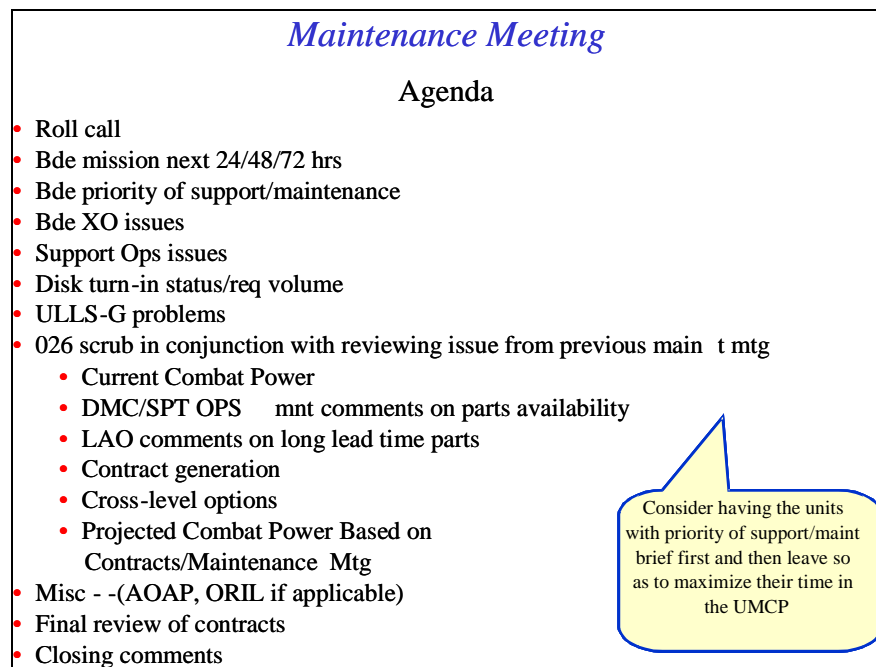


Figure D-3. Maintenance Meeting Agenda

D-8. This sample agenda provides a focus for the maintenance meeting. This focus will ensure all key maintenance managers stay on-topic and reduce the time they are away from their units. Another item to consider is to have units with a priority of maintenance scrub their 026 first to result in even less time away from their units.

D-9. A key item in the agenda is the projected combat power based upon the contracts/maintenance meeting. The contract is an essential element of the maintenance meeting. Without a solid contract, maintenance managers do not have a clear understanding as to which actions must be performed to build combat power for the next mission.

For an effective contract, maintenance managers must accomplish the following:

- Ensure contracts are recorded.
- Ensure contracts specify who is going to take actions, when these actions must be completed and who will report completion of these actions.
- Track contracts before the next maintenance meeting and apply necessary adjustments to applicable contracts.

Pre-Maintenance Meetings

D-10. A necessary precursor to the maintenance meeting is the pre-maintenance meeting. The pre-maintenance meeting serves as a dress rehearsal for the maintenance meeting and is the forum where direct support maintenance managers synchronize their efforts and resolve issues prior to the conduct of the actual maintenance meeting. During this pre-meeting the Support Operations Maintenance Officer, SSA Accountable Officer/Representative, Shop Officer, and the MMC Representative should conduct the following actions:

- Conduct an initial scrub of the 026 Report.
- The Shop Officer should pay particular attention to NMC equipment that shows an organizational “M” status (going to DS) and does not have an assigned DS work-order.
- The SSA representative should ID critical parts awaiting customer pick-up and any other critical parts stocked by the SSA.

EFFECTIVE MAINTENANCE MEETINGS

D-11. After the battle, the Brigade Commander meets with the Forward Support Battalion (FSB) Commander, the Brigade XO, and the SPO to discuss development of an SOP and the key issues from the maintenance meeting that should be considered. After reviewing and implementing the key tenets of the maintenance meeting, the maintenance meeting should sound like this:

- The Infantry Task Force BMO briefs:
 - “B31 (M1A1) is down for a #3 right side idler arm. The NIIN is 01-180-8677; I ordered the part this morning and the document number is 0110-5000. I need this part no later than 1900 hrs. in order to get it in to tomorrow's fight.”
- The Support Operations Section representative answers:
 - “That part is stocked at the MSB and it is on-hand.”
- The TSO briefs:
 - “We stock that part but it is zero balance.”

- The SPO gives the following guidance:
 - “DMC, call back to the MSB immediately after the maintenance meeting and get that part put on the 1500 hrs. push; call the Maintenance Officer when the part is on the truck and on its way to the BSA.”
 - “TSO, I want you to call the Maintenance Officer when this part arrives.”
 - “Maintenance Officer, when this part arrives, call the unit and tell them the part is on-hand in the BSA. Write this contract down.”
 - “BMO, when the part is received and the tank is FMC, call the Maintenance Officer and close the loop with him.”
 - Maintenance Officer, Closely track this and provide me with an update at 1900.”
 - “If any of you have problems with completing this contract, call the Maintenance Officer or myself and finally, the final status of this contract will be reviewed at tomorrow’s maintenance meeting.”

D-12. As a result of the maintenance meeting and the synchronized efforts of the maintenance managers, the Infantry TF has a combat power of 40 out of 44. What made this happen? First, the Infantry TF BMO came to the maintenance meeting prepared. He had the NIINs and document numbers for all of his critical parts. In addition, when he prepared for the maintenance meeting he reviewed how long it would take his mechanics to repair this system. If the repair would take longer than the time available, then this system could not be projected to become FMC prior to the fight and, as a result, the critical efforts of the maintenance managers would not have been expended to get this back in the fight. He covered this time concern by giving the maintenance managers a NLT time that he could receive the parts to fix the system. For example, if he gave a NLT time of 1500 hrs., the maintenance managers would not have aggressively sought after the part because the system could not make the fight even if the part was available. The SPO provided clear guidance to the managers; he gave them guidance as to which actions they were to take and who they would call to close the loop on this contract. Finally, the Support Operations Maintenance Officer wrote down this contract to ensure it could be reviewed at the next maintenance meeting; if the contracts were not completed, they could discuss the why it did not occur (a summarized AAR to ensure future contracts could be completed).

D-13. The maintenance meeting ensures efforts of the maintenance managers are synchronized. It also ensures all leaders and maintenance managers have a clear picture of the current and projected combat power, who is conducting specific actions to generate combat power for future operations, and when these actions must occur. The maintenance meeting also serves as the forum to close the loop on open actions and ultimately ensures all maintenance resources are allocated to effect combat power for future operations. The ultimate result is that the commander has the maximum amount of combat power to conduct future operations.